

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell, December 15, 1893, with transcript

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Mr. McInnis reports that the experiment to preserve a flow in the frozen water troughs by boring a hole in the bottom seems to be successful. The overflow places have frozen up — but the flow through the hole continues undiminished — in fact rather increased than otherwise. The water now flows through about 200 yards of frozen trough. Tomorrow morning the attempt will be made to carry the water down through another hundred yards or so by clearing a passage through the ice and cutting holes in the bottom wherever necessary to prevent overflow. When this section has been frozen over without stopping the flow at the bottom — success will be sure and we will make an attempt to clear a passage all the way to the reservoir. In the mean time the water holds out and we can probably hold our own for some time to come.

We have cut down the overflow pipe in the tank in the attic — so as to cause overflow below the level of the leak — and in this way get the advantage of a continuous stream through the pipes in the house.

The furnaces are not acting well today — they supply heat enough — but the air supplied is charged heavily with coal gas.

I fear the furnaces leak. I remember that during a recent storm — Duncan had to close or nearly close, the cold air flue — on account of the icy winds blown up into the house through the hot air vents. Perhaps they have not been opened widely again.

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Susie arrived here today. I am very much pleased with her musical abilities. Mrs. Kennan spent afternoon and evening here — and Mr. McCurdy and I (or rather John McAuley drove her home in a sleigh tandem.

Now Model made and tried today with wings made of wires — was a failure so far as rising was concerned. Did not rise at all. May prove a convenient form for covering with light material — but I don't want to use light material at all. I want a good strong machine — all of metal.

Tomorrow I hope to test how “Our best” of Nov. 14th and Dec. 14th will act when loaded with dead weight. Think I see my way now to construction of a machine that will sustain itself over a boat — drawing its supply of power — through a flexible wire — from a dynamo on board. If so we can experiment upon steering by electrical means.